

Semi-Weekly South Kentuckian.

VOLUME IX.

HOPKINSVILLE, CHRISTIAN COUNTY, KY., MARCH 15, 1887.

NUMBER 24

CHAS. M. MEACHAM, W. A. WILGUS.
PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY
MORNING BY
MEACHAM & WILGUS,
PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS.

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One copy, one year, strictly cash in ad-
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Adventures of Tad;
OR THE
HAPS AND MISHAPS OF A LOST SACKEL.
A Story for Young and Old.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.
AUTHOR OF "PETER ADAMS," "HOWS ONE
TO BE," "PAUL GRAYSON," ETC.
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Published by Special Arrangement.]

CHAPTER IV.—CONTINUED.
"Well, sir," exclaimed Captain
Flagg, pointing his finger, so to speak,
towards the end of the stumpy fore-
finger with the tip of the other, and
speaking with intense though quiet en-
joyment, "he put it like this: 'James
W. Dunn, my client,' he says, 'claims
pay at the rate of five pound a day for
the use of his wheel, during his eighteen-
month voyage.' It's his wheel, isn't it?
If he had to pay for it, and there's the
name on the rim. The ship's had the
use of it all this while, and a ship can't
get along without a wheel, no better
without a compass," says the lawyer,
"and you can settle it right now, or
else we'll take it to the admiralty
court!"

"Wasn't he smart and did the owner
have to pay it?" exclaimed and
questioned Polly in the same breath.
Captain Flagg nodded affirmatively.
"And so the sailor got a big lot of
money!" put in Tad, as an inter-
ruption.

"He got what the lawyer left, most
likely," returned Captain Flagg, rather
dearly, which slight reflection against
the legal professions was, fortunately,
not understood by his hearers.

The sun disappeared behind the ocean
rim, and after supper the side-lights
were put out, and Tad fastened on to
the duties of a lookout for now the
"Mary J." was headed right out to-
ward the open sea, which looked terri-
bly dark and cold to Tad's astonished
eyes, particularly as there was no such
thing as a sign of land anywhere to be
seen, excepting the low sandy cape
shown astern, which were fast disap-
pearing in the distance and increasing
darkness.

Before sending the youthful mariner
for aid, Captain Flagg called him be-
low, and gravely commanded him to
put on some well-worn under-flannels,
several sizes too large, which, however,
Tad found very comfortable, a pea-
jacket, within whose capacious folds
three or four boys of Tad's dimensions
could have been buttoned, and a large
fur cap, which, only for resting on the
rims of his ears, would have complet-
ely extinguished him.

"Don't look so stylish as you
might," Captain Flagg acknowledged,
after Tad had effected the required
change, "but sailors go in for comfort,
not a style," with which assurance
Tad—conscious that he looked rather
funny, to say the least—was fain to be
consoled. Indeed, the most that
troubled him was the fact that Miss
Polly might possibly laugh when he
ventured on deck. But, though Polly
had been brought up in the country,
she had too much natural politeness to
laugh; yet it must be confessed that the
depths of the deep sun-baked hid a
simple or two, as Tad would have
ward, wondering what the matter
could be with the water to make the
vessel tumble about so.

CHAPTER V.
Darker and darker grew the night,
the wind sounded more and more
dreadful, the vessel tossed about in what
seemed to Tad a terribly dangerous
manner, while he began to feel an un-
pleasant nausea, which recalled his
first and last experience in trying to
sink a five-cent cigar.

"I wonder if I ain't going to be sea-
sick," thought Tad, with a terrible
sinking sensation in the neighborhood
of his stomach. "It was fortunate that
none of the far-away dots of red and
green, which represented the lights of
distant ships, came very near the track
of the 'Mary J.' for the unfortunate
lookout very soon became insensible to
everything but his own sufferings.

When Eph came forward to strike
the bell, poor Tad was whooping over
the rail, in all the agonies of sea-sick-
ness, which was not made a particle
less painful by Eph's assertion that it
wasn't nothing but 'he'd soon get
over it. Manhandle—

on the quarter-deck, too, his heavy
gun-boots seemed to appear in half a
dozen places simultaneously, as he
pulled, and hauled, and shouted, in the
cursing operation of reefing, while
Polly, enwrapped as to her slim form
in a sort of feminine storm-coat of
water-proof cloth, which buttoned
tightly about her, and an oil-skin hat
fastened under her plump chin, stood
holding the wheel, in obedience to her
father's cheery commands.

All that took place was to Tad's be-
wildered mind a terrible complicated
experience. He knew that while the
"Mary J." was pitching and tossing
and rolling in all sorts of ways, the
sails were lowered part way down the
mast, where they hung, laughing and
slating in a most exasperating man-
ner. And he was dimly conscious of
seeing Eph's long legs astride the
boom-end, waving hither and thither,
as he juggled at a rope, while Captain
Flagg and George Washington per-
formed the most unheard-of prodigies
of seamanship, as despite the strug-
gling and bellying of the stiff canvas,
they contrived to tie it down to the
boom, so that when the sails were
hoisted up again, they were not nearly
as large as before.

And then waxing bold, the gallant
old sea-dog, Captain Jethro Flagg, de-
cided that instead of trying to tie it
down, he would—so to speak—use his
own nautical expression—"keep her jug-
gling to the north and east'ard."

So all through that eventful night
the "Mary J." pursued her billowy
course, while poor Tad, in a sadly de-
moralized state of mind and body, lay
stretched in the coil of rope having
muzzled, feeling, even in his deathly
sickness, oh, so ashamed that Polly,
a girl, not quite as old as himself, should
show such courage, while he, a lubber-
ly boy, couldn't even offer to do the
least thing to keep the vessel from
going straight to the bottom of the sea!

But I myself, don't think there was
any thing very strange in the matter.
It was Tad's first experience, and sea-
sickness, like conscience, makes cov-
ers of us all. The Atlantic Ocean is a
terrible fellow to take the courage
out of a landsman when it gets on a
sort of rampage, and I don't wonder
that that little Mr. Oscar Wilde, with
his fastidious tastes, should shudder-
ingly declare that he was disappointed
with it. But I believe that, in spite of
this severe criticism, the Atlantic goes
right on roaring and dashing, and
swallowing up ships, and making peo-
ple seasick, just as it has been doing
for ever so long.

Tad couldn't be persuaded to go be-
low. He thought that when the vessel
did come to go down, he would perhaps
stand a better chance on deck—though,
it is true, he couldn't swim a stroke.
And as he lay there all night long
cursing, he never began to abate a
little, as did also the stiff westerly
breeze which, coming further from the
south, gave the "Mary J." a perfectly
fair wind for her home-bound passage.

They were all so kind, when, quite
dizzy and weak, Tad managed to stagger
to his feet, like a fly thrown out by
the warm rays of the morning sun,
which dried up the wet deck, and made
the waves of the great blue sea all
about them sparkle with gladness.
George Washington got him some hot
coffee, and said he was glad to see
him "sensible." Captain Flagg,
who looked quite fresh and hearty in
spite of having been up all night,
smiled broadly, telling Tad that he'd
got over the worst of it, and would be-
gin to get his sea-legs on in a jiffy.

Eph grinned at him over the top of
the wheel, and proffered the use of his
jack-knife, if he (Tad) wanted to white-
en the Polly glanced at him glaucously,
and Bounce lapped the ends of Tad's
extended fingers. On the whole, Tad
didn't feel nearly as badly regarding
his humiliation as he had expected to;
but all his bright visions
of the pleasures of seafaring life
had been swallowed up in the darkness
and terror of the night before. He was
not intended by nature for a sailor, and
now Tad's greatest desire was to set his
foot on dry land again. I know that, in
contrast with the average boy of juve-
nile fiction, this sounds tremendously
unheroic; but I can't help it; there are
"born sailors" and born landsmen, and
Tad was one of the latter. On the whole,
he was glad that he had found the
sake people and things he finds them
in real life. Yet as Tad began to feel
better, there was much to wonder at
and admire all about him. Far away
on the port hand was the distant coast-
line, dotted here and there by the white
shaft of a light-house. To starboard,
the sea rolled on and on, till the
waters washed the very rim of the
great arching dome of blue which came
down to meet it. On every side were
the sails of passing vessels, and beau-
tiful beyond compare was the sight of
a handsome ship, with all drawing sail
set, standing in for Boston Light, head-
ing almost directly for the schooner.

On the same, with her yards braced
sharp against the back-stays, throwing
the sparkling foam from the cutwater
in great swaths, that swept along her
glassy sides and formed a creamy track
astern. As the stranger was passing so
near, Captain Flagg hailed her
through an immense speaking trumpet.
"What ship's that, and where from?"
"Ship 'Sedona,' a hundred and thirty
days from Calcutta—what vessel's
that?" bellowed back the Captain, who
was standing by the weather mizen
rigging, with his hand on a backstay.
"Schooner 'Mary J.' of Bixport;
twenty-four hours out on Boston,"
bawled Captain Flagg, with a gracious
wave of the hand; and Tad, who had
listened to these nautical queries and
replies with great marveling, wondered
what made the Captain of the ship
double himself up, like a man with a
sudden attack of colic, or like a person
in agony of laughter, as the great
vessel went plunging onward toward
her destination.

"Then that goes down to the sea in
ships has cur's experiences, Thaddeus,"
said Captain Flagg, laying down
his big trumpet with an impressive nod
of the head.

With a vivid recollection of his own
experience of the previous night, Tad
replied emphatically that he had no
doubt of it.

"When you come to be a sailor,
Thaddeus, and may be a ship-master,
like myself," pursued the Captain,
feeling mechanically in his pockets for
his pipe—which he discovered, a mo-
ment later, to be on the deck, in pos-
session of Bounce, who was gravely
dragging it away to the immeasurable
delight of Polly—"an' you've gone
through the 'responsibilities, an'
dangers, an' typhoons—an'—things
gen'ly," he rather hastily concluded,
as he recovered his pipe from Bounce,
"you'll realize that what Solomon says
about truth being stranger'n fiction is
just about as he's put it."

"But I—I don't think I want to be
a sailor," faltered Tad, with downcast
eyes.

"What—not want to be a sailor
bold, and plow the ragin' main," ex-
claimed the Captain, with a look of un-
utterable amazement.

"No, sir," faintly replied Tad. And
as he thus spoke, he hung his head so
far one side that the big fur cap fell
off, and was immediately seized by
Bounce, who began to worry it, evi-
dently regarding it as some new pro-
dies of the feline race, until, in the
fervor of his attack, he fell into it bodily,
and gave vent to small yelps, ex-
pressive of extreme fear.

It was some time before the Captain
recovered from the shock occasioned
by Tad's reply. That a likely boy
should prefer a prosaic existence
above, who had once tasted the pleas-
urable excitement of "a life on the
ocean wave," passed his simple com-
prehension. But gradually yielding to
Polly's artful arguments, Captain
Flagg's brow began to clear.

"All right, my lad," he said, quite
cheerfully. "I own I'm a little stuck
about it, but, seeing you don't take
nearly to sailing, there's no pro-
cessing nowadays to force you into
going against your will. Only," re-
marked Captain Flagg, tilting back his
oil-skin hat, and scratching his head
reflectively, "I don't just know what
to do with you, now you've changed
your mind."

"I know!" suddenly exclaimed
Polly, clapping her hands.

"Well?" asked her father, interroga-
tively.

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